

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated January 2, 2004. Claims 1-68 are pending, with claims 1 and 12 being in independent form. By this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 12 to place the claim in better form for examination, by removing an informality, and to clarify the claimed invention.

Claims 1-3, 5, 12-14 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as purportedly anticipated by Japanese Patent Publication No. 10-91294 (Kohama et al.). Claims 7, 8, 10, 18, 19 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Kohama in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,764,864 to Sujita. Claims 4, 6, 9, 11, 15, 17, 20, 22-68 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but, according to the Office Action, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 12 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application relates to a power-saving function for an electronic mail terminal device.

In recent years, network-connected devices, such as, for example, network facsimile devices, have been adapted to perform information (for example, image information in a case of a network facsimile device) exchange via electronic mail. Such devices may have a power-saving function. However, the typical e-mail adapted network-connected devices having a power-saving function (such as described in Kohama) is a client device requiring a server.

Applicants devised an electronic mail terminal device with a

power-saving function, with out requiring a server. The device includes a power saving control unit configured to set the device into a power-saving mode when a first power-saving condition is satisfied, and configured to cancel the power-saving mode when a second power-saving condition is satisfied.

For example, independent claim 1 is directed to an electronic mail terminal device that transmits and receives information through electronic mail. The electronic mail terminal device comprises a communication unit and a power-saving control unit. The communication unit is connected to a network and performs electronic mail data exchange via the network. The power-saving control unit is configured to set the communication unit and the device into a power-saving mode when the device detects that a first power-saving condition is satisfied, and is configured to cancel the power-saving mode when the device detects that a second power-saving condition is satisfied.

Kohama, as understood by Applicants, is directed to a client-server system wherein a client device is notified of arrival of mail by display of a message thereon when the server receives a mail addressed to the client. As pointed out in the background section of the present application (see page 3, line 11 through page 4, line 1), Kohama discloses a power-saving function.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the power-saving approach of the claimed invention is patentably distinct from Kohama.

As described in paragraph [0033] of Kohama, a client device 20 detects whether a prescribed key operation is performed by a user of the client device. According to Kohama, when the prescribed key operation is not performed on the client device over a prescribed time period, the power supply to the display or other parts of the client

device is cut off. After the power cut-off, a server device 10 detects whether the reception of an electronic mail addressed to the client device occurs at the server device, as described in paragraphs [0034-0036] of Kohama. The server device (the mail server) has a special function of notifying each client device of electronic mail reception.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that that the power-saving approach of the claimed invention is not disclosed or suggested by Kohama. More specifically, Applicants find no teaching or suggestion in Kohama of an electronic mail terminal device comprising a power-saving control unit configured to cancel the power-saving mode of an electronic mail terminal device upon electronic mail reception as in the claimed invention.

Sujita, as understood by Applicants, is directed to a facsimile machine having a power saving function.

The Office Action states that Sujita discloses a fax machine which can selectively set one of a plurality of modes, with the fax machine being equipped with a power saving function and using a call connection via a modem (dial up) to receive data.

According to Sujita, the facsimile machine has a telephone mode and a facsimile mode, and is equipped with a function of setting its message receiving mode. Column 4, lines 15-22 of Sujita discloses that when a power saving reset trigger signal in the facsimile machine is judged to be a calling signal (at step S3 of Fig. 2), the message receiving mode stored in the mode setting part 2 is checked by the power saving control unit 3. If the set message receiving mode is the facsimile mode, the power saving state is reset (at step S6 of Fig. 2). Column 4, lines 28-31 of Sujita discloses that when the facsimile machine is set to the telephone mode, the received calling signal is

not judged to be a power saving state reset signal, and in this case, the power saving state is continued.

Accordingly, Sujita teaches that the calling signal in the facsimile machine having the telephone mode and the facsimile mode is judged to be a power saving state reset signal when the facsimile machine is set in the facsimile mode, and the same calling signal is not judged to be the power saving state reset signal when the facsimile machine is set in the telephone mode.

In contrast, according to the present application, the second power saving condition is that an event occurs. Namely, the power saving mode is canceled when an event occurs according to the claimed invention. It is not necessary that the power saving mode resetting condition of the claimed invention have a special time dependence.

Moreover, Applicants do not find a teaching or suggestion in Sujita (or in Kohama), however, of a power-saving control unit configured to cancel the power-saving mode of an electronic mail terminal device upon electronic mail reception as in the claimed invention.

Since the cited art does not disclose or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention, the cited art does not render the claimed invention unpatentable.

In addition, Applicants submit that it would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art to combine the teachings of a client server system by Kohama with the resetting of power in a facsimile machine as taught by Sujita.

According to the facsimile communications procedure of Sujita, at the time a message is received by the facsimile machine having the telephone mode and the facsimile mode, the power saving state is reset

upon reception of a calling signal when the facsimile mode is already set. Generally speaking, in the facsimile reception procedure of Sujita, the facsimile machine simply awaits reception of a facsimile message.

In contrast, in the electronic mail system of Kohama the server device needs to provide a special function of notifying each client device of electronic mail reception. Given the requirement of Kohama that the server device needs to have the special function of notifying each client device of electronic mail reception, it would not have been obvious to adapt the system of Kohama with the approach of resetting power in a facsimile machine as taught by Sujita.

Independent claim 12 is patentably distinct from the cited art for at least similar reasons.

Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 12, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited references.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition, and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite fees to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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